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The chapter containing the lesson presents us with four types of human character, the comparison of which must be instructive. First, we have the accusers, practitioners of a sham art, men who maintained a high position by practices which were of no real benefit to society. As a class, doubtless, they were cultured and kindly; but they were cruel and unjust as only such men can be, in regard to any thing that endangered their position. Then, secondly, there were men among the attendants of the king, who were eager to become the tools of the wickedness of the accusers, and of what they saw to be the unreasonable anger of the king, doubtless expecting to reap personal advantage from their undue alacrity to help the great men in doing wrong. It is a typical fact that it was these accomplices, and not the principals in the wrong, who perished at the mouth of the furnace. Thirdly, there was Nebuchadnezzar, lordly and great, but uncontrolled, ready to sacrifice his own best interests to the passion of the moment. He is here exhibited as having his weaknesses, as well as his strength. And fourthly, we have the three Hebrew men, unobtrusive, competent, conscientious, with supreme faith in God; and they, as against the others, command our verdict of approval.

Certain questions as to the historicity and the literary character of the Book of Daniel may best be discussed in connection with the next lesson.

STUDIES IN ARCHÆOLOGY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

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XII.

THE IDEA OF REDEMPTION.—FIRST ARTICLE.

In reading, lately, an account by Prof. Max Müller of the life of Rammohun Roy, founder of that society in Brahmanic reform called "the Brahma Samaj," my attention was arrested by an incident illustrative of some things in pagan sentiment which in a study such as is now proposed we may do well to take along with us. Rammohun Roy, Debendranath Tagore, and Keshub Chunder Sen were leaders in the same effort at reform of the prevalent religion of India; Chunder Sen, however, having come somewhat farther in the direction of Christianity than either of the others. The first of the three, Rammohun Roy, renounced idol-worship when a boy of sixteen, and from that time until his death in 1833 devoted himself in efforts to bring back the religion of his country to that which he believed to have been its most ancient form, a simple monotheism. He sought to unite with this monotheism various features of Christianity, especially its moral system, and thus to frame a religion which, based upon the ancient Hindu faith, with due reverence retained for the Hindu sacred books, should be freed from the oppressive inventions of Brahmanic priestcraft, including that of caste, and to add some at least of the salutary elements of the religion of Christ. He suffered, in consequence, we are told, "the loss of all things." His course, says Prof. Max Müller, "entailed not only censure and punishment, and the loss of the love of his parents: it entailed loss of caste, expulsion from society, loss of property. All this Rammohun Roy was prepared to face: and he had to face it.

He was banished from his father's house once or twice; he was insulted by his friends; his life was threatened, and even in the streets of Calcutta he had to walk about armed. Later in life his relations (his own mother) tried to deprive him of his caste, and indirectly of his property, and it was a mere accident that the law decided in his favor."

In the last year of his mother's life her heart seems to have softened toward him. She even listened to him, and almost consented to accept his faith. Yet not quite. "Son," she said to him, "you are right. But I am a weak woman, and am grown too old to give up those observances which are a comfort to me." It seems strange to us that, intelligent as she must have been, and almost persuaded as she really was, she should as the last religious act of her life, set out upon a pilgrimage to the temple of that hideous and bloody idol, Juggernaut, at Puri, and there, although a high-caste woman, engage in menial offices at the shrine of this hateful deity, counting it a privilege to die under the shadow of the temple in which such horrid rites had been performed during centuries. "Perhaps," says Max Müller, her son "knew that the hideous idol which she worshiped in the fetid air of his temple, Juggernaut, as we call it, was originally called Jaganatha, which means 'Lord of the World;' and that He, the true Lord of the World, the true Jaganatha, would hear her prayers, even though addressed to Juggernaut, the uncouth image."

Whether or not we share the hope in this respect which the Oxford scholar seems to feel, we can at least be touched by the evident sincerity, in her way, of the aged devotee, clinging thus to the faith which had been for her the true one during a long life, and resorting for comfort to this idol's shrine, and perhaps in some degree finding it there, strange as it may seem to us.

It is easy for those educated in Christianity to dismiss any heathen faith as a falsehood and a deception; and it is hard for such to speak with patience of those who with motives of selfish ambition, or whatever other, have built up in past ages those huge systems of oppressive idolatry which century by century have been at the same time a tyranny and a lie. But let us consider, meanwhile, how many there must have been among the devotees of such faiths, to whom their paganism was the only religion they knew or could know, and who under an impulse that has in it some semblance of piety, reached out into that darkness for comfort under a hard lot, and some shred of hope to console their despair. Even where, as in the case of the mother of Rammohun Roy, we see them cling to their pagan faith while offered a better one, we remember that there are ties, other than those of mere superstition, by which every religion holds its devotees.

DEFINED.

The idea of redemption, in one sense or another, is common to all religions. While using the word, however, in such applications, we should have to qualify, very much, its Christian meaning. The idea of evil and the idea of redemption must of necessity, in any religion, be closely related. We find it so in our own Christian teaching. For we perceive that what is recovered in Christ is rightly apprehended only as what was lost in Adam is so. He who has a slight or mistaken view of sin is almost certain to err as to the nature and method of salvation; while conversely, if we find atonement, regeneration, the whole doctrine of grace rejected by any one, we are sure to find also, on inquiry, the Christian view of original sin, the depraved and lost condition of man by nature, equally denied.

The two ideas are in like manner related in all pagan religions, and in all the centuries of man's religious history; so that, in using the word "redemption" in such a way as is now proposed, we must expect to find in it a sense as wide and various, and in the main as mistaken, as we saw to be the case in the related idea discussed in the last two of these papers. We must understand by the word, then, that method and hope of relief, under the pressure of felt evil, and sorrow, and dread, which pagan peoples have found, or tried to find, in their religion. It may have reference to a future life; it may concern simply the evil of the present; it is just the operation of that impulse so universal and so strong in human nature to seek for comfort, and help, and hope, in religion. Some of the manifestations of this we are now to study.

CLASSIFIED.

With a view to some classification of material in this connection, we will examine this idea of redemption in such religions as are now in view under these three as the principal forms: the *ascetic*, the *judicial*, and the *propitiatory*. This classification may not be in all respects exact, yet it is perhaps sufficiently so for the present purpose.

ASCETICISM.

The ascetic idea in pagan religions has a form and a meaning in a good degree peculiar to them. In one of the Buddhist books, we are told how, early in his career, the founder of that religion, having before him a great crowd of persons who had come to him for instruction, proceeded to teach them that which, as the book states, "is the special doctrine of the Buddhas, that is to say, Suffering, its Origin, its Cessation, and the Path;"—in other words, that what this system proposes to teach is the origin of suffering, how it may be made to cease, and the "path" or the manner of life in which one must walk in order to reach that end. If we recall the circumstances, as briefly touched upon in the last paper, under which Buddha was led to turn his back upon the palace and the throne to which he had been born, in order to become a religious reformer, we shall see how it came about that the central idea of his system is what we there find it. The sight of what men suffer in the forms of disease, old age and death—this with what he knew of the Brahmanic teachings under which he had been reared, as to the doctrine of repeated births, or transmigrations, with all the frightful possibilities of such a lot; the account given of him shows that it was the sense of all this that put him upon the idea of finding out some remedy for this sad human condition. Now a study of the books of that religion makes it clear that this is really the central feature of the whole system. Even where sin is warned against, it is because if you sin you suffer pain. How to escape suffering, is the question always. And the answer is, always, strange as in one view it might seem, the answer of the ascetic. Find out what are the occasions of suffering in the various conditions of human life, and then make yourself so independent of these as that it shall be all the same to you whether they exist or not.

In Buddhistic phraseology, this would be termed the repression of "desire." The root of all that we have most to dread, and most reason to shun, according to these teachings, is "desire;"—that is to say, the natural tendencies, choices, likes, appetites, longings which belong to us as human beings. One can see, readily enough, how an observer, having no outlook in any other direction, and studying human life just at that point of view, *might* infer from what he sees, that men are

miserable chiefly because they make themselves so by desiring so *much*, by desiring it so *eagerly*, and by seeking its attainment in ways so sure to be *disappointing*. The ascetic theory of dealing with the question how to escape all this is, in that aspect of it which we find in Buddhism, to just regulate your desires, and regulate them so thoroughly that in the end all these things which mean so much to human beings in general shall be to you matters of pure indifference. One who makes this his rule will *choose* poverty, since it is the fact that the more men have the more they want; he will avoid all close ties with his fellow-beings, inasmuch as his love for others will just load him with their burdens and sorrows in addition to his own; he will teach himself to despise even bodily comforts, since by thinking much of these and seeking them earnestly he may pamper himself to that extent that the slightest deficiency of ordinary provision may be to him intolerable. He will rid himself of all fear of death in making the discovery that it is possible for him to have that "beyond" all the same to him as if it did not exist; and disease and pain he will master by rejoicing in them as that merited flagellation by which this body, which he despises, and in which all the evil of his lot concentrates, is being chastised as it deserves.

One may say that there is very little of religion in all this, and that is true; but what we are discussing is, if we go by the books, a very large part of Buddhism. You may say, besides, that the hundreds of millions of Buddhists in the world to-day are surely not living up to the rule of an ascetic system like this. That also is true. But this is the ideal Buddhism, and any adherent of the system who should do and be what his sacred books teach him would be and do all this and much more of the same kind. Very naturally, it was in carrying out this rule that the Buddhist monasteries grew up, so strikingly similar in many things to those of the various Romanist orders, although antedating them by many centuries.

RESEMBLANCES AND CONTRASTS.

The Buddhist and the Brahman religions are both ascetic, although with material differences. Against one feature of Brahmanism Buddhism was in fact a form of revolt. In the lives of Buddha there is a passage which tells how, after he had determined to abandon forever all his expectations and prospects as a prince and the heir to a throne, and to devote himself to a religious life, he kept company for a brief period with certain Brahmans who were subjecting themselves to all the minute and painful observances of their ritual. After a little time he became convinced of the uselessness of such observances; and it is mentioned, by writers, as one evidence of the fact that he was in his ideas in advance of his contemporaries, that he cast away all such, and began to teach views of the efficacy of mere observance with which a Christian finds it easy to sympathize. In one part of the teaching attributed to him we find this: "To walk religiously, and afterwards to receive happiness, this is to make the fruit of religion something different from religion; but bodily exercise is but the cause of death, strength results alone from the mind's intention." The translator uses here, as you see, a phrase, "bodily exercise," which is identical with that used by translators of the New Testament in rendering a passage in one of Paul's epistles. "Bodily exercise," says Paul, "profiteth little, but godliness is profitable for all things." Buddha and Paul are at one as respects this which is meant in "bodily exercise," mere outward observance, rituals, and rules in themselves alone; although as to what is beyond they are as wide apart as possible. Paul can speak

of "godliness" as that which he will recommend in contrast with all such "bodily exercise;" that work of divine grace in which the regenerated soul recovers the lost image of God. Buddha can only speak of the man's own self-discipline in accordance with "the mind's intention." "If you remove," he says, "from conduct the purpose of the mind, the bodily act is but as rotten wood; wherefore regulate the mind, and the body will spontaneously go right." The general thought is very strikingly expressed in another of the sayings attributed to Buddha: "If a man for a hundred years worship Agni (fire) in the forest, and if he but for one moment pay homage to a man whose soul is grounded in true knowledge, better is the homage than sacrifice for a hundred years."

Buddhism and Brahmanism were alike in this—that both held man's triumph over evil, and so his redemption, to consist in a self-chastening, in which there should be systematic and inexorable *repression* of what is natural to man, and what both alike call "desire" shall be killed. But they differ in this, that Brahmanism places great stress upon *outward* ascetic observance, upon ritual forms, upon a list of "shalts" and "shalt-nots" that run on without end. Buddhism would put each individual man upon doing this whole work for himself, with no ritualistic system fastening its claims on him; and he would have it for him especially an inward work. In one place Buddha exclaims, indignantly, "What is the use of platted hair, O fool? what of the raiment of goat-skins? Within thee there is ravening, but the outside thou makest clean." Much like the words of Jesus where he reproved those who made clean the outside of the cup and the platter and whitened their sepulchres. This, in fact, is one of the points at which Buddhism and Christianity approach each other; though they are still heaven-wide apart, in their conception, respectively, of what a man needs, in order to his redemption, *other* than this mere attention to what is outside.

ESSENTIAL DEFECTS.

The vice of Buddhism, in this respect, is the same as that of Brahmanism. The two systems aim at the same thing, though they would reach it by different roads. Fausböll, the translator of one of the Buddhist books, the Sutta-Nipata, answers the question, "What is sin, according to Buddha?" as follows: "Subjectively, sin is desire, in all its forms; desire for existence generally, and especially for name and form, that is, individual existence." The way in which desire for existence thus becomes sin, seems to be that it puts us upon so many expedients, not always right ones, for preserving existence, for making it happy, according to our notion of happiness, and makes us shrink from what, according to that system, is the highest good, that is, non-existence. "But desires," the writer I am quoting continues, "originate in the body; sin lies objectively in embodiment, or matter, and consequently the human body is looked upon as a contemptible thing." To what this leads is clear. Sin is not of the soul, but of the body. Redemption is not regeneration; it is *repression*, ultimately, virtual destruction. Not to become the sons of God, in the likeness of God, but to become nothing; as nearly that as possible now, wholly that hereafter.

There is a curious colloquy in one of the Buddhist books, in which the ascetic idea is set over against what is more like the common experience of common men. Buddha and a rich herdsman, named Dhaniya, are conversing together; Dhaniya, rejoicing and boastful in his prosperity, like the rich man in our Lord's parable, Buddha insisting that he is himself much the happier man, though but a wandering beggar, with his shoeless feet, his alms-bowl, and his yellow robe.

Dhaniya says: "I have boiled my rice, I have milked my cows, I am living together with my fellows on the banks of the Mahi river, my house is covered, the fire is kindled; therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky."

Buddha says: "I am free from anger, free from stubbornness, I am abiding for one night near the banks of the Mahi, my house is uncovered [meaning the open heaven], the fire of passion is extinguished; therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky."

Then Dhaniya: "Gad-flies are not to be found with me, in meadows abounding with grass the cows are roaming, and they can endure the sun when it comes; therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky."

Buddha again: "By me is made a well-constructed raft [meaning his ascetic habit and life], I have passed over (to nibbana), I have reached the further bank, having overcome the torrent of passions [he has made himself what he had aspired to become—one to whom all outward conditions are matters of pure indifference]; there is no further use for a raft; therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky."

The thought, of course, here is, that the ideal condition for man is to have no ties, no earthly interests, no care for any thing; to have repressed every manner of natural desire, so that good and evil are alike indifferent to him. This is the nibbana, or nirvana, of the present; a foretaste of that which is to come. You have the same thing in these singular points of instruction for those who would attain to this highest good:

"In him who has intercourse with others affections arise, and then the pain that follows affection; considering the misery that originates in affection, let one wander alone like the rhinoceros.

"He who has compassion on his friends and confidential companions loses his own advantage; seeing the danger in friendship, let him wander alone like the rhinoceros.

"Just as a large bamboo tree with its branches entangled in each other, such is the case with the children and wife; like the shoot of a bamboo not clinging to any thing, let one wander alone like the rhinoceros."

A kindred utterance of Brahmanism is as follows: "The self of one who has subjugated his self and is tranquil, is absolutely concentrated (on itself), in the midst of cold, and heat, pleasure and pain, as well as honor and dishonor. The devotee whose self is contented with knowledge and experience, who is unmoved, who restrains his senses, and to whom a sod, a stone, and gold are alike, he is said to be devoted. And he is esteemed the highest, who thinks alike about well-wishers, friends, and enemies, and those who are indifferent, and take part with both sides, and those who are objects of hatred, and relatives, as well as about the good and the sinful."

It may be as well to note, before we pass, one point of difference between the ascetic idea in these pagan religions, and this idea as we find it in historical Christianity. The thought of acquiring *merit* by such means does not appear to be equally prominent in the pagan asceticism. Buddhism calls it "the Path"—it is the road by which a certain end is reached. Brahmanism views it in much the same way, although in it there is considerable appearance of the notion that merit is acquired in these ways. Even in Brahmanism, however, the ascetic life is a means by which to achieve that ultimate union with the universal being, the divine Brahman, which is the goal of highest attainment. How the Christian ascetic was accustomed to view the matter we know well. By so much as he tormented himself, by so much was he richer in that kind of merit which should open heaven to him, and enrich him forever with heavenly felicity.

The *judicial* and the *propitiatory* elements in the pagan idea of redemption will be noticed in another paper.